THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD - JANUARY 4, 2026

Have you ever learned something that changed the way you saw yourself and the world? Did someone ever say something to you that made a lightbulb go off in your head? Have you ever discovered an idea that was so profound that, all of a sudden, everything in your life made sense?

We call those experiences “epiphanies”. They are sudden insights that make us see reality differently. They are revelations of truth that change us forever. Because of that knowledge, our lives canl never be the same.

Today we celebrate “The Epiphany of the Lord.” Like those other epiphanies, the epiphany of Jesus is the revelation of who He is. He is the King of the Jews but also the Savior of the World. He is God Himself who has come down to earth to save us.

This epiphany changed everything. The world can no longer be the same.

The first change we read about today is in the wise men from the East. They see the star announcing Jesus’ birth. The light of that star changed everything for them. Even though they were not Jews, they had some sense that this newborn king had also come for them. So they understood that they couldn’t just sit at home admiring the star. They had to follow it no matter where it took them. They had to see for themselves this newborn king. And they had to bring Him gifts and worship Him.

Unlike the wise men, we don’t need a star to reveal to us who Jesus is. The wise men only knew part of the story. That is why they had to go to Jerusalem to find out where the Messiah was going to be born. But we know the whole story. We know that Jesus Christ is the Messiah who came to save us. We know that the baby born in Bethlehem is God, who came down from Heaven to reveal His love to us. And we know how far Jesus would go to show us just how much we are loved by God. The great epiphany of His love would be when He died on the cross for us and rose from the dead.

This revelation of the love of God shining forth in Jesus Christ makes a demand of us. Is it a truth that will change us? Or is it just an interesting historical fact that has no relevance for our lives? Will we be like the wise men and recognize Him as our true King? Or will we be like King Herod and refuse to bow to anyone but ourselves?

How we answer these questions will decide the course of our lives. It will also determine where we will spend eternity. Because, in the end, it all comes down to this. Did we embrace God’s offer of love and friendship, or did we reject it to pursue our own plans?

Besides the wise men from the East, there is another man who experienced an epiphany of God’s love. He is Saint Paul. When he was on his way to persecute Christians, the Risen Jesus appeared to him. It was such a dazzling display that it blinded him. From that day on, his life

would no longer be the same. He made a complete change. Instead of persecuting Christians, he was now spreading the gospel as its greatest missionary.

There was another great epiphany in Saint Paul's life. Like the wise men from the East, Saint Paul learned that Jesus Christ is not only the King of the Jews but the Savior of the World. He came not only for Jews but for all people. This is how he describes it in today's second reading: "...the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel."

To us, this might not seem like a great revelation. But for the people of Saint Paul's time it was revolutionary. Jesus Christ died and rose from the dead to save everyone no matter what their nationality, religion of origin, gender, or race. No one is outside the saving power of Jesus. There is no one who is not loved by God.

Sadly, there are many people who just cannot accept this truth. They believe that God cannot love them because they are too sinful. Or it just seems too good to be true that the God of the Universe cares about them. They just do not believe that they are worthy of God's love and concern. Some of those people might be in this church today. The good news is that the love of God has been revealed in Jesus Christ. That promise is for everyone. As amazing as it might sound, the God of the Universe loves you. He is closer to you than you could ever imagine.

This truth is brighter than any star. If we welcome that love into our hearts, it can change everything for us.

The Epiphany of the Lord is the thunderous revelation of God's love made visible in the baby born for us in Bethlehem. It is a love that we celebrate every Sunday as we gather to proclaim His death and resurrection. It is a love that is revealed to us in Holy Communion. This God desires such an intimate and loving relationship with us that He wants to enter our bodies. When we embrace this love, it transforms us.

We no longer need a star in the sky to announce the coming of Jesus. He has already come, and He promises to come again. It is up to us now to bring that light of God's love to everyone we meet so that they too can come to know this amazing truth and be transformed by it.